

We hope you will be able to come to our ASM
this year, and look forward to meeting you.

Estelle Palley
Hon. Secretary

DELIUS SOCIETY - NEWSLETTER JANUARY, 1964

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This is surely the happiest newsletter yet issued. It is now nearing the end of the month in which we held our first live recital of the Society at Leighton House, and the memory of it is still vivid. It is difficult to know where to begin with praises and thanks, but I feel sure none will be offended if I start by saying "thank you" to members and friends for their splendid support. Leighton House is not the most accessible place, and the evening was somewhat foggy, but seventy persons came along, and the committee was more than rewarded for its efforts.

Our very grateful thanks are due to the DELIUS TRUST, whose generous contribution of £50 made it possible for us to put on this concert without causing the funds of the Society to wither away and perish. It was a great pleasure to have with us Mr. Emanuel, with Mrs. Emanuel, and Mr. Felix Aprahamian, representing not only the Delius Trust but also as the very best possible friends of the Society. We also thank Mr. Mahony, who unfortunately could not be present.

We remember particularly Mr. Emanuel's sympathy and encouragement in August of last year, when we were having some difficulty in finding a venue for this concert.

We were also happy to have with us on this occasion Miss Kathleen Long, the distinguished pianist, whom many members obviously recognised with pleasure.

The artistes, Wilfred Brown, tenor; Gordon Stewart, piano; and Sheila Nelson, violin; performed the 1st and 3rd violin sonatas, and ten songs, and the applause left no doubt that everyone enjoyed their performances to the full.

However, we do not wish to detract from the artistes when we say that it was Mr. Eric Fenby, our illustrious President, who put the final seal on our success, though we know he would modestly disclaim this. In his opening remarks, Mr. Fenby said that he was happy that the Society had been formed from the spontaneous desire of the members themselves to have such an organisation. He had long recognised the need for such a Society, but in view of his own special relationship with Delius had not felt it appropriate to take the first steps himself. Mr. Fenby then went on to praise the early work done for the Society, notably by our founder-member, Dr. Gibson, and thanked the Delius Trust.

Our Secretary has asked to say that she warmly thanks all members who helped her by making their reservations well in advance for Leighton House, and commiserates with those members (Mr. Stafford and Miss Coleman phoned on the day, and Mr. Kitching has since written) who through fog or illness were unable to be present in spite of having notified their intentions to attend the concert.

Letters were received from Sir Thomas Armstrong and Lord Boothby, regretting that absence from London made it impossible for them to be present on the 4th, but sending us best wishes, and Sir Malcolm Sargent's secretary wrote as follows, on the 19th December, 1963:-

/ "Sir Malcolm

"Sir Malcolm was very interested to see your letter and leaflet.

"Unfortunately he cannot be with you on the 4th January but sends his best wishes for a successful evening. Sir Malcolm enjoyed the performance of "Late Swallows" in Houston and he has suggested it for a performance in the Proms next year.

"Sir Malcolm sends his best wishes to the Society."

Many members had not previously visited Leighton House and expressed their delight at such pleasant surroundings. The ground floor is a perfect imitation of a moslem palace, without being either ostentatious or vulgar. It would be a wonderful place for a performance of "Hassen"!

The studio of Lord Leighton, who was obviously a very successful Victorian painter, is now used for recitals and meetings. (The only objection was that it tended to be too resonant).

An unforgettable evening, and perhaps the atmosphere of success was heightened by the knowledge that only that morning Peterborough in the Daily Telegraph had given the Society some excellent publicity! *

Editor's note. We have to thank our Chairman for arranging this happy augury of the evening's events.

We are so sorry that we were not able to offer members refreshments on the 4th January, due to catering restrictions at Leighton House. I must say I could not imagine partaking of anything other than sheep's eyes and rice in such gorgeous surroundings (we apologise to the vegetarians among us). We hope however to make up for this at our next two events, which are:-

April 7th, at 7.30 p.m. "In Search of Delius"

An illustrated lecture to be given by Mrs. Dugmore, one of our members, from Nottingham, which will be held at the Holborn Library, 32, Theobalds Road, W. C. 1. In Mrs. Dugmore's own words, "The first half hour will take us to Solano.....The second half hour will take us to the high mountains of Norway."

I am sure we are due for a most interesting and informative evening, with refreshments!

May 2nd, suggested time 2.30 p.m. Annual General Meeting

We had been having some difficulty in finding a venue for our Annual General Meeting (with refreshments!) but following a personal call at the library by Committee member, Mr. Rodney Meadows, this has now been booked for the Holborn Library (address already given) for May 2nd, i.e. 32 Theobalds Road, London, W. C. 1.

Whether this is a concession is still not entirely clear, but if in fact we can (contrary to our previous understanding) have meetings there on a Saturday in the afternoon, we might find this extremely useful.

(It may be possible, just for this one occasion, to get an extension after 6 p.m. so that we can have a social evening with members who may not otherwise be able to get along to our meetings).

/ Mr. Kitching

Mr. Kitching - a Derby member - who attended our meeting at the Holborn Library on the 29th November last, has kindly sent us the following contribution to our newsletter.

"DERBY DELIAN GOES TO TOWN"

"It was with some trepidation that a Delian from the provinces ventured to the metropolis for a meeting with the elders and betters of the Society, on the 29th November 1963.

"On arrival at the Holborn Public Library, where the meeting took place, he was impressed by the contemporary setting. He had rather expected to slip in unheralded and likewise to leave unnoticed, but before he had much chance to view the pictures on view, he was welcomed and asked who he was and whence he came. His reply to the latter question "Derby" appeared to cause some consternation and surprise, and he was immediately introduced to - it seemed - everybody.

"By the time the meeting began, Derby Delian was feeling very much at home, and he felt more so when the time came to eat the delicious refreshments provided by the ladies on the committee.

"The programme was interesting and varied. The principal event of the evening was the playing of a tape kindly lent by Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel of extracts from the Jacksonville Festival.

"It was rather surprising that Jacksonville elected to perform the wedding music from "A Village Romeo & Juliet" which seems uncharacteristic Delius. However, despite some preliminary qualms about the suitability of the choice of this item, the extract proved more interesting than expected. Perhaps it is only in comparison with the other music in the Opera that the wedding music seems rather flat. Performed on its own, the original impression (formed in the Opera House) of lack of originality faded somewhat.

"Having been to the Bradford Centenary celebrations it was particularly exciting to hear the two extracts from the "Songs of Farewell" again. Let us hope that a recording of this work will soon be available. The Jacksonville performance had a piano accompaniment which rather reduced the impact of the extracts (particularly "Joy, Shipmate, Joy!"), but the performance was good. The singing of the unaccompanied part songs was particularly fine: the songs "To be sung of a Summer Night on the Water" are, to me, vintage Delius.

"Following the meeting, Derby Delian was unwillingly (?) dragged off to a local beer-house, following which he was escorted home by the Chairman. Whether this was the Chairman's innate hospitality, or whether he felt that Derby Delian was incapable of finding his way home, is not clear. The Chairman again entertained the visitor among his family on the following Sunday, and eventually despatched him back to Derby with some Bartok and Holst (!!) records. (It is to be hoped that the Committee do not record a vote of censure upon him for this indiscretion).*

"Derby Delian asked the Chairman whether he thought it would be a good idea to try to form a Midlands Branch of the Society as provincial members could not attend the London meetings regularly. The Chairman welcomed this suggestion, and Derby Delian (whose name and address are given below) is now endeavouring to enlist the necessary support. Would any members living within shooting distance of Derby or Nottingham who would be interested in participating in a Midlands Branch please communicate with Mr. R. B. Kitching, 8 Park Lane, Allestree, Near Derby (Phone: Derby 57118)

/"Please

"Please do not expect any immediate results as the scheme is still only embryonic, and the first step will be for Dick Kitching to buy a tape recorder or enrol a member with one!"

Chairman's note. I assume that all members of the Society own all extant Delius discs. Further - Holst and Bartok were near contemporaries of Fred's.

In further explanation of this excellent scheme, Mr. Kitching says that it is proposed that this branch should be generally administered from London and that, for example, all subscriptions would be paid direct to our Treasurer, Miss Todd. He continues:-

"Although I have two possible venues in mind, it will be preferable to have alternative venues so that one person does not always have the inconvenience of the meeting being at his house."

There is no doubt that it would be pleasant for Londoners to have an occasional meeting in a private house, in an easily accessible part of London, free from the restrictions of the Musicians Union, the Performing Rights Society, Uncle Tom Cobley and all! But so far we do not seem to have a member in London with either a sufficiently large drawing room, or elastic walls!.

Mr. Walker, a Shropshire member - I nearly wrote a Shropshire lad, but remembered that Delius was one of the few English composers who did not set it to music - delighted us by coming to our concert at Leighton House, and has since written us to say that on SUNDAY, 26TH JANUARY, there is to be a short talk on Delius in Music Magazine, by Antony Payne. Mr. Walker continues:

"Also I see that the BBC are broadcasting the beautiful Cello Sonata on the 3rd Programme in the week Feb. 15 - 21 with Florence Hooton, a tireless advocate of it, performing."

Records.

Reissues. This month has seen the reissue by Philips of two previously deleted records - "Appalachia" and the "Arabesque", and "Hassan" and "North Country Sketches". No doubt most members will already possess them, but their reissue on a cheap label, at 21/- each, makes them a bargain, with such marvellous performances by Sir Thomas Beecham. For sheer mysticism, I find the "Arabesque" a fascinating work, perfectly suited to the gramophone record.

Violin Concerto. This has been issued in the U.S...., under the Westminster label, played by Milton Gerle and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Zeller. It is backed by the Bloch violin concerto, and if any member gets hold of a copy, I should be interested to hear how it sounds. (Editor)

Sonata No. 3. Mr. Kenneth Holman, a record dealer, has written to say that he now has a Delius (presumably Sonata No. 3 from previous correspondence) Dohnanyi record for £2. 5. 0. which we asked him to put by for any interested member of the Delius Society. It may be still be available and members should contact him at Ondine House, Wey Road, Weybridge, Surrey, Weybridge 3788.

78s. Mr. Stafford has kindly passed on to us his collection of 78 Delius recordings, for distribution where they will "help the cause of Delius' music". The Secretary will be pleased to supply a list of these still available to any interested member.

Mass of Life. Alas, we have no news of a reissue, but this work has been mentioned again and again in recent correspondence. Mr. Kitching reported that he bought the copy advertised in a recent newsletter, which leads me on to say that Mr. Kenneth Gray reported in November that a score of this work (piano reduction of orchestral part) is held by Edinburgh Public Library and is doubtless available from the Inter-Library Borrowing Service on application. Other members who have referred to this work recently are Dr. Gibson, Mr. G. L. Gray, and Mr. Parfitt.

Our thanks are due to Dr. Gibson, Mrs. Swanston and Mr. Friend for material which we so much regret we are not able, owing to limitations on the size of this newsletter, to include in this issue. This will appear in a later issue. We trust that despite the vagaries of Christmas post, all members received a copy of our December newsletter?

We were very pleased to renew acquaintance with Mr. E. W. Clarke at Leighton House on the 4th January. Mr. & Mrs. Clarke made a special journey from "Sea Drift", Stubbington, Fareham, Hants, to attend the concert. Mr. Clarke, one of our first members, was present at our inaugural meeting in 1962.

Souvenir Programmes

Members sometimes ask "WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP"?

There is now a very practical way in which members can, by one comparatively small service, help the Society and Delius in so many directions.

It will be recalled that Mr. Fenby offered us some Festival programmes, and our President kindly arranged that these should be sent to London without transport charges to the Society. These have now been delivered to my house at 119, Constantine Road, London, N. W. 3., and I should now like to get them moving again at the earliest possible moment.

I understand from the Post Office that it would cost "about 1/-", at printed paper rate, to send a copy to any address in Great Britain. If members would send me "about 4/-" by crossed postal order, made out to the Delius Society, any sum remaining after deduction of postage and cost of wrapping will help the Society's funds.

I know that many members will already have these brochures, in which case why not buy a copy to pass on to a prospective member, or at least well-wisher of the Society?

I solemnly warn members that unless they are disposed of quickly, they will be brought out on every possible occasion - unto the third and fourth generation!

Perhaps overseas members would care to send an "international reply coupon", and the Society will do the rest?

New Members

We warmly welcome to the Delius Society :

- (120) Peter Chamberlain, Esq., L.R.A.M.
Bryanston School,
Blandford, Dorset.
- (121) Miss Rita Coleman,
90, Torquay Gardens,
Redbridge, Ilford, Essex.
- (122) Eleanor, Lady de Montmorency,
35, Leinster Avenue,
London, S. W. 14.

Our Editor suggests that if the River Stour in Dorset was a little wider and ran slower it would be an ideal setting for "Summer Night on the River" but says that as it is several years since he visited Bryanston, he expects to receive an irate letter from Mr. Chamberlain telling him that the river is now silting up and is as slow-moving as the Loing!!

Our Secretary wishes to thank her good friend Miss Rita Coleman who is at present helping to type the envelopes for this newsletter.

Members will be particularly delighted to know that Lady de Montmorency has become a member as a direct result of our concert. Our new member was, we believe, Mr. O'Brien's guest.

But we have to admit that some members have dropped out since we issued our last members' list in April 1963 (a revised copy is on the Secretary's list of "things to do!").

We are sorry that they do not feel able to renew their subscriptions. Reluctance to part with money can be understood in some circumstances, but not when real value is being offered for it. And this we are always trying to give.

So if any other members are becoming faint-hearted, why not write to the Consumer Council before resigning from the Society? They might tell you that our product is still the best buy, whichever way you look at it.

This lapse into commercial jargon is regretted. But we do have a wonderful product, and with members' assistance, we hope to increase our share of the musical market.

We have just received from Mr. Orr, one of our members, copies of some correspondence between himself and Delius from 1916-1921, which our Treasurer, to whom they were sent, tells us is a "fascinating" reading. We thank Mr. Orr for this kind gesture. Recopies of this correspondence will of course be passed over to Mr. Rodney Meadows for the Society's library.

DAVID SIMMONS
Chairman